

# Netherlands

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## Information

A GOVERNMENT AGENCY  
OF THE NETHERLANDS

## Service

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GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN THE NETHERLANDS

FOR VISUAL ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE.

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All matters concerning the visual arts and architecture are the responsibility of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare and are dealt with by the Visual Arts and Architecture Sub-division of the Arts Division of this Ministry.

More than two million guilders\* were allotted to the Budget of this Sub-division for 1967 to finance such activities as:

1. Purchases, commissions and prizes 340,000 guilders (page 3)
2. Subsidy scheme for buyers of works of art 500,000 guilders (page 5)
3. Exhibitions in the Netherlands 115,000 guilders (page 8)
4. Subsidies for institutions 550,000 guilders (page 9)
  - a. Nederlandse Kunststichting
  - b. Stichting Kunst en Bedrijf
  - c. Stichting Goed Wonen

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\* - One Dutch guilder = 0.28 U. S. \$

d. Nationaal Comité Nederland

e. other organizations

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 5. Stipends                  | 45,000 guilders (page 10)  |
| 6. Honorary grants           | 325,000 guilders (page 11) |
| 7. Travel grants             | 45,000 guilders (page 12)  |
| 8. Exhibitions abroad        | 70,000 guilders (page 12)  |
| 9. Sculptors' materials fund | (page 13)                  |

Several other Ministries are also involved in various ways in this field:

10. In new buildings constructed by the Government Building Department (Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning) 1-1/2% of the building costs are spent on works of art (page 13).
11. In a similar manner, the Ministry of Education and Sciences spends, out of the funds available for the building of educational establishments, etc., 1% of the building costs on works of art for such buildings (page 14).
- 12/13. The Ministry for Social Affairs and Public Health contributes toward the livelihood of artists who are temporarily unable to make ends meet from their work alone. The Ministry formed the "Voorzieningsfonds voor Kunstenaars" (Artists' Provident Fund) (see under 12, page 14) for the purpose and introduced the Artists' Social Provisions (see under 13, page 15).

Matters relating to the State museums of ancient and modern art are the concern of the Archaeological and Nature Conservation Division of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare. These, however, will not be dealt with in the present survey, nor will matters concerning secondary art schools and schools of applied art, which come under the Ministry of Education and Sciences.

1. Purchases, commissions and prizes

A certain sum (340,000 guilders in 1967) is set aside each year for purchases, commissions and prizes in the field of visual arts and architecture. The buying and commissioning of works of art are intended on the one hand to encourage artists and on the other to ensure that representative items become the property of the State (museums have their own budgets). Purchases are made and commissions given on the recommendation of five committees dealing with painting, sculpture, the graphic arts and drawing, the minor arts, and the monumental arts. Such works of art as are purchased and produced on commission are administered by the "Dienst voor 's Rijks Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen" (State-owned Loaned Works of Art Department), which lends works of art to museums to supplement their collections, and for the embellishment of public and other buildings. These State-owned works of

art are always available for exhibitions both at home and abroad.

Besides special commissions, commissions are regularly given for, among other things:

a. School Prints

Every year a number of artists are commissioned to make a graphic print (woodcut, etching, lithograph, etc.), of which they are required to supply 60 copies. In addition, the artists are allowed ten copies, which they may sell privately. The graphic works of art thus obtained by the State are made available free of charge in series of five different copies to any school that may be interested in them and wishes to use them for the artistic decoration of classrooms, etc. The prints may also be used to illustrate drawing lessons, art lectures, etc. The artists are left entirely free to choose the subject of their print and the technique they will use in executing it.

b. Delta Project

For a number of years now, graphic artists and painters have been commissioned annually to depict an aspect, at choice, of the Delta project. Commissions are also given for the representation of aspects of other important hydraulic projects in the Netherlands.

The graphic artists are required to produce 60 copies each

of two works (woodcuts, lithographs, linocuts, etc.); the painters, an oil painting or a number of gouaches or watercolors. A number of the prints thus commissioned are presented to museums for their print collections; the remaining prints are made up into series to be used as gifts on special occasions. In certain cases, the Delta prints are also used as school prints.

Ways and means to encourage architects are also under consideration.

The State Prize for the Visual Arts and Architecture, created in 1966, was awarded that same year to a painter. The prize is awarded annually in each of the following categories in turn:

1. painting, graphic art and drawing;
2. sculpture;
3. minor arts and industrial design;
4. architecture.

The prize is 8,000 guilders and is awarded to a living Dutch artist or architect.

## 2. Subsidy scheme for buyers of works of art

As an experiment, a Government scheme was introduced whereby private persons might qualify for a subsidy when buying works of living Dutch artists. The purpose of the scheme was on the one hand to promote the sale of works of art and on the other

to encourage the acquisition of such works by private persons.

In the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare's budget for 1967, 500,000 guilders have been earmarked for this purpose.

The subsidy is granted to persons making purchases at public exhibitions in the Netherlands where the exhibits are for sale; the Ministry decides to what exhibitions the scheme shall apply. Organizers of exhibitions may apply to have their exhibitions considered for the subsidy scheme. Artists' associations, art galleries, institutions concerned with visual arts and municipal corporations are among the bodies that may be regarded as "organizers". Consideration can be given only to exhibitions of oil paintings, gouaches, watercolors, drawings, graphic works, sculptures (both large and small), etc., where at least ten artists are represented by at least 40 works. An exception with respect to these quantities may be made in the case of organizers of a series of smaller exhibitions (e. g. galleries), provided such a series includes at least ten artists represented by 40 works in all in the course of the year for which the subsidy is applied for. The Ministry, upon advice of the Arts Council, approves or rejects the applications. Such factors as the importance of the exhibitions and the organizing bodies, the artistic quality of the exhibits, the geographical

distribution of the exhibitions and the various categories of visual art are taken into consideration.

Organizers participating in the plan are guaranteed a subsidy for their exhibition or series of exhibitions enabling them to offer private Dutch buyers a 25% rebate up to a maximum of 250 guilders exclusively on works priced up to 3,000 guilders.

The buyer thus pays the organizer 75% of the sales price; the latter pays the artist the full price. Supposing an organizer has been guaranteed a subsidy of 5,000 guilders for a certain year and he sells works worth 800 guilders each (on which he can allow a rebate of 200 guilders), he will be able to sell 25 subsidized works during that year.

The buyer is required to sign a contract that he will not dispose of the work within a period of five years. When the exhibition ends, he forwards the buyers' signed contracts to the Ministry. An important part of the implementation of the scheme consequently rests with the organizers of the art exhibitions. They are free to spread the guaranteed subsidy over all their exhibitions for the year in question, provided all such exhibitions qualify for inclusion in the scheme.

On the whole, the plan has worked satisfactorily. It is not possible to ascertain whether the plan has actually caused a



decrease in the number of non-subsidized purchases.

### 3. Exhibitions in the Netherlands

As a rule, the Ministry itself does not organize exhibitions in the Netherlands. It does, however, contribute toward the expense of exhibitions of contemporary art organized by others. For the year 1967, 115,000 guilders are available for this purpose. The Arts Council is usually asked for advice where applications for this kind of subsidy are concerned.

The exhibitions organized under the name "Jonge Nederlandse Kunst" (formerly called "Start") merit special mention. At these exhibitions the works are shown of artists from all parts of the country, aged up to 30. They have been held since 1954. They are organized by a special committee of young artists that annually appoints a selection board to form a collection. In the space of one year, the collection is shown in from five to seven towns. The aim is two-fold: to enable young artists to show their work and to promote the exhibition of modern visual art throughout the country. During the exhibitions, the members of the committee arrange discussion evenings and show the public around (including groups of school children). The Ministry helps with the organization and finances the project.

4. Subsidies for institutions

A number of the foundations, societies, etc., that have taken upon themselves the task of encouraging the arts and of stimulating interest in art are Government-subsidized. About 550,000 guilders have been voted for this purpose in 1967. These institutions include:

a. "Nederlandse Kunststichting" (Netherlands Art Foundation).

The main task of the Foundation is to organize exhibitions all over the country (for instance in factory canteens, hospitals, etc.) and in general to encourage the public's interest in art.

Artists lending works for such exhibitions receive a fee.

b. "Stichting Kunst en Bedrijf" (Art and Industry Foundation).

The Foundation works to increase the interest of industrial concerns in art. For a number of years it has acted as an intermediary in commissions and purchases by industrial concerns involving more than one million guilders a year.

Industrial concerns, donors and members of the Foundation contribute toward the operating expenses. Artists whose works are sold through the intermediary of the Foundation pay the Foundation a 15% commission.

c. "Stichting Goed Wonen" (Ideal Home Foundation).

This non-commercial institution was set up for the purpose of promoting the art of living in the Netherlands by providing as

7. Travel grants

For 1967 an amount of 45,000 guilders is available for travel grants to exponents of the visual arts. These grants are awarded to a number of artists on the recommendation of a special committee to enable them to gain fresh impressions from a journey abroad.

8. Exhibitions abroad

Participation in international events such as the Biennales in Venice, São Paulo, Salzburg and Paris and the Triennale in Milan is organized by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare. The selection of the Dutch entries for such events is made by a Dutch commissioner appointed for each occasion on the advice of the Arts Council. The commissioner is assisted by one or more experts to be appointed by him. Together with a representative from the Ministry, they constitute the selection board for the official Dutch entries to the international event concerned. Moreover, in cooperation with the Dutch diplomatic missions abroad, the Ministry regularly organizes representative exhibitions of contemporary Dutch art in foreign countries, sometimes within the framework of a cultural agreement with one of those countries. The latter activities are the responsibility of the International Cultural Relations Division of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare, one of the tasks of this Division being the

implementation of cultural agreements.

9. Fund for sculptors' materials

For some time now the possibility has been considered of setting up a fund for sculptors in view of the fact that the high cost of materials makes it very difficult for sculptors to undertake works of any size, unless they have actually been commissioned. If such a fund were instituted, sculptors could be helped with the purchase of the necessary materials (and for instance, with the casting in bronze of a large sculpture). The works thus created could be rented to municipal corporations, industrial firms, etc. They could also be sold under a rental-purchase agreement, or outright. The proceeds could then be apportioned between the artist and the fund in proportion to the amount advanced the artist for the purchase of the material used. In this way the fund might be made wholly or partly self-supporting.

10. The 1-1/2% arrangement

The Government architect may order such monumental works of art as mural paintings, stained-glass windows, mural sculptures and mural tapestries, sgraffiti, mosaics, etc., for the embellishment of new Government buildings and spend up to 1-1/2% of the total building costs on them. These expenses are borne by the Government

Building Service of the Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning.

11. The 1% arrangement

One per cent of the building costs of new schools that are wholly or partly Government-financed may be used for the same purpose as that described under 10. The orders are placed by the School Boards concerned, but the choice of artists, the designs of the works of art and an estimate of the costs involved require the approval of the Ministry of Education and Sciences, which is advised on the artistic aspects by a special committee of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare. The costs are defrayed from the former Ministry's budget.

A number of provinces and municipalities have similar percentage arrangements and their implementation is virtually the same as those described in the foregoing.

12. Artists' Provident Fund

The Fund was created in 1936 under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health. A large number of artists' organizations are affiliated to the Fund. Members pay an annual contribution to the Fund through their associations. The Government subsidy amounts to 310% of the total of such contributions and the municipalities in which the affiliated artists reside

contribute another 200%. Consequently, the Fund's total revenue is more than six times the artists' contributions. In addition, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare helps to subsidize the salary of the adviser employed by the Fund.

Any artist in straitened circumstances may through his association apply to the Fund for assistance. When his requirements have been evaluated, he is given a weekly allowance for a certain period not exceeding 13 weeks per annum.

The Board administering the Fund is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities and the affiliated artists' associations.

The Fund may be regarded as a kind of voluntary "unemployment insurance fund".

The Fund also administers a special fund which derives its means largely from private sources and which renders financial assistance by lump sum payments for special purposes, such as the purchase of materials, the organization of exhibitions, the equipment of a studio, extra expenses on account of illness, etc.

### 13. Social program for the benefit of artists

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health has made



provisions enabling artists who temporarily are not in a position to make a living, to retain their artistic independence. The municipalities in which the artists reside are largely responsible for the implementation of this plan. All municipalities have an advisory committee composed of experts on the visual arts. Any artist (who, as a rule, should be at least 25 years of age) unable to make a living from his creative work, may apply to the Municipal Executive to be considered for the plan. After an inquiry into the artist's financial position, the municipality asks the advisory committee for its opinion on the artistic merits of the artist's work. If this opinion is favorable, the artist may be commissioned to create one or more works (in certain cases he may be helped to find suitable employment in his field) or one or more works of his are bought. In both cases, the fee from which he is to defray his living expenses for a number of weeks ahead is determined and in accordance with certain factors (such as the size of his family). If the artist still has not regained his financial independence after this period, he may ask to be considered for another commission or purchase of his work. Originally the fee was paid in weekly installments, but now the rule is that the artist receives payment in a lump sum.

In order to ensure uniform observance of the plan, the Minister

has appointed a Central Advisory and Revisional Committee to advise him on the plan and its implementation. The plan enables artists to appeal to the Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health in the event of their application to a Municipal Executive being rejected. Before making a decision, the Minister asks for the Central Committee's opinion in such cases.

Twenty-five per cent of the costs of the plan are borne by the municipalities concerned and seventy-five per cent by the Government. All works of art acquired under the plan are divided proportionately between the Government and the municipalities. The works of art thus acquired by the Government are administered by the State-owned Loaned Works of Art Department referred to under 1.

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